Using research is the hallmark practice of a professional nurse. Research can provide nurses with the much-needed justification for a change in practice, policy, or other workplace operation.

Some examples of research utilization are as follows:

- If a professional nurse finds a credible study in the literature regarding the maintenance of staff morale during low-census staffing, this information can be used to develop a proposal for improved staffing and morale in his or her practice.
- A nurse may want to build a strong team of staff members. Seeking out research studies that identify helpful and successful team-building activities and exercises would provide the evidence needed to support the use of the activities that he or she would like to have implemented.
- At the staff-nurse level, patient care is constantly changing. Finding research to support the new methods of patient care is vital to continuous quality improvements.

Advantages of Using Research

There are many advantages of using research in nursing practice. Professional nurses who use research to guide their practice foster a sense of scientific rigor with their interventions for patient care. Research provides a strong justification for ways to care for patients and for making much-needed changes in daily operations in the workplace.

Some examples of this are as follows:

- New methods to perform patient care duties can improve patient outcomes (e.g., daily bathing without a reusable basin can result in less nosocomial infections and other complications).
- The accuracy of many automated blood pressure machines is in question. By researching or finding existing studies regarding manual sphygmometers compared to automated sphygmometers, nurses can help make educated recommendations.
- Many changes to wound care have been developed over the past 20 years because of research that demonstrated improved healing times with various wound treatments.
Implications of Not Using Research

As shown, there are strong implications of incorporating nursing research into practice. The implications of not using research in nursing practice are just as strong. When nurses do not work to find research that justifies their nursing interventions, patient care might suffer. Also, valid evidence of changes to patient care or improved workplace operations may go unnoticed or disregarded.

Conclusion

It is time to incorporate valid and reliable evidence into one's nursing practice. Armed with the ammunition of credible research studies, policy changes, procedure changes in patient care, and other evidence-based practice initiatives, change can be facilitated to develop new methods for daily practice.